

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended by incorporating therein a feature wherein the connecting bolts can be moved in the plurality of cutouts in the radial direction of the top flange to adapt a pitch circle diameter of said connecting bolts to various pitch circle diameters.

This amendment was made on the basis of the description on page 11, lines 23 to 34.

A pitch circle diameter of mounting bolt holes of an operating unit is generally different depending on the size and type of the operating unit. In the butterfly valve according to the present invention, the top flange of the valve body for mounting the operating unit thereon is formed with the plurality of cutouts extending from the outer peripheral edge of the top flange to the center thereof. Therefore, the pitch circle diameter of the connecting bolts for connecting the operating unit and the top flange to each other can be changed to various pitch diameters corresponding to operating units of various size and types, without using a spacer or the like. This allows the valve body of the butterfly valve according to the present invention to be used for various sizes and types of operating units.

The rejection asserts that the plurality of cutouts of the valve assembly disclosed in JP3052091U (hereinafter referred to as reference (1)) extend from the outer peripheral edge of the top flange toward the center thereof so that the pins can be moved in the radial direction of the top flange. However, in the valve assembly of reference (1), the cutouts are provided on the top flange of the valve body in order to connect the valve body to the operating unit dedicated to that valve body with the pins, and are arranged so as to correspond to the grooves formed on the operating

unit. If the cutout has any play, the pins cannot correctly fit into the cutouts. Therefore, the cutouts have a shape corresponding to the shape of the pins, and the valve body can be used for only one size and type of operating unit. Thus, the cutouts of the valve assembly of reference (1) do not allow the pins to move in the radial direction within the cutouts.

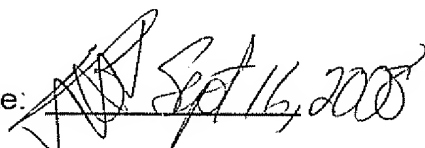
Further, references (2) and (3) do not disclose the above feature, i.e., a cutout extending from the outer peripheral edge of the top flange toward the center thereof so that bolts can moved in the radial direction of the top flange. Accordingly, there is no teaching or suggestion of the claimed invention in any of references (1) - (3), taken alone or together, and hence there is no prima facie case of obviousness. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of all outstanding rejections. Applicants submit that the claims are now in condition for allowance, and respectfully request formal notification to that effect. If, however, the Examiner perceives any impediments to such a notice of allowability, whether substantive or formal, the Examiner is encouraged to call Applicants' attorney at the number provided below. Such informal communication will expedite examination and disposition of this case.

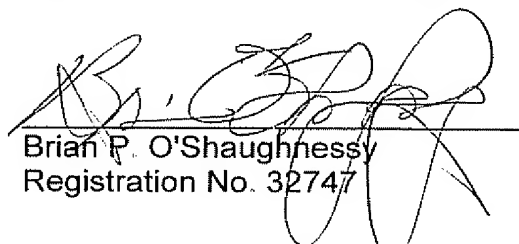
Respectfully submitted,

BUCHANAN INGERSOLL & ROONEY PC

Date:

 Sept 16, 2008

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